

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. **(Currently Amended)** A method of forming a neutral paint colorant, comprising the steps of:

blending a first colorant with a paint base to form a paint having a chroma substantially equal to zero and having a value;

adding a first quantity of one of said first colorant or said paint base to said paint, to vary the value of said paint;

measuring the chroma of said paint; and

if the chroma of said paint is not substantially equal to zero, adding one or more offsetting colorants to said paint to reduce the chroma of said paint so that it is substantially equal to zero;

wherein said neutral paint colorant comprises a mixture of said first colorant and said offsetting colorants, the composition of said neutral colorant being determined by the relative amounts of said first colorant and said offsetting colorants which are in said paint.

2. **(Original)** The method of Claim 1, wherein the mass ratio of said first colorant to the total mass of the mixture is equal to the mass of the total amount of said first colorant in said paint divided by the total mass of said first colorant and said offsetting colorants in said paint,

the mass ratio of each of said offsetting colorants to the total mass of the mixture being equal to the mass of the total amount of the individual offsetting colorant in said paint to the total mass of said first colorant and said offsetting colorants in said paint.

3. **(Original)** The method of Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

adding a second quantity of one of said first colorant or said paint base to said paint, to vary the value of said paint;

measuring the chroma of said paint; and

if the chroma of said paint is not substantially equal to zero, adding one or more of said offsetting colorants to said paint to reduce the chroma of said paint so that it is substantially equal to zero.

4 - 10. **(Canceled).**

11. **(Currently Amended)** A method of producing a paint, comprising the steps of:

Appl. No. : 10/007,896
Filed : November 13, 2001

blending a mixture of pigments with a grinding liquid to form a neutral paint colorant;
adding said neutral paint colorant to a first paint base to form a first paint; and
adding a volume of said first paint to a volume of a second paint having a chroma and a value to form a third paint having a chroma and a value ;
wherein the chroma of said third paint is less than the chroma of said second paint, the hue and value of said third paint being substantially the same as the hue and value of said second paint.

12. **(Original)** The method of Claim 11, wherein said step of adding said neutral paint colorant to said first paint base includes controlling the addition of said neutral paint colorant so that said first paint has a value substantially equal to the value of said second paint.

13. **(Original)** The method of Claim 11, wherein said second paint comprises a mixture of paint colorants blended with a second paint base, said second paint base being identical to said first paint base.

14. **(Original)** The method of Claim 11, wherein said blending step includes blending Color Index Pigments Yellow 42, Red 101, and Black 7 with said grinding liquid, so that said neutral paint colorant comprises:

6.3% to 7.7% Color Index Pigment Yellow 42;
2.16% to 2.64% Color Index Pigment Red 101; and
3.6% to 4.4% Color Index Pigment Black 7.

15. **(Original)** The method of Claim 14, wherein said neutral paint colorant comprises:

7.0% Color Index Pigment Yellow 42;
2.4% Color Index Pigment Red 101; and
4.0% Color Index Pigment Black 7.

16 – 25. **(Canceled).**